drink the few cupfuls of water carried in buffalo paunches to supply the children.[16]

In very early times, if we take what we know of the Shoshones as the measure, the Comanches could not have taken much interest in sartorial splendor. Even in later days their work-a-day garb was simple and crude. They hardly looked like the popular conception of the painted, beaded, and befeathered Indian. For festive occasions, however, they had their fancy dress garb, and young men, especially, liked to think of themselves as dandies. A *tuiβItsi* was much to be admired, and if asked what a *tuiβItsi* is, any Comanche will answer, "A handsome young man with shiny black hair, all dressed up on a good-looking horse." The *tuiβItsi* had his counterpart in the *naiβi:* a good-looking girl with long braids, painted and all dressed up in a good buckskin dress. When there were dances or when the band was moving from one camp site to another, the *naiβi* and *tuiβItsi* liked to parade and show off to the admiring glances of the people—and each other. Adult Comanches also liked to dress up, but they were not so self-conscious about it.

Boys, until they reached the age or eight or nine, went entirely nude unless the weather was severe. Regular attire generally consisted of breechclout, leggings, and moccasins only. The former was a broad piece of cloth or buckskin drawn up between the legs and passed under the belt both behind and before. The ends, one in front and one behind, formed loose, hanging flaps which extended almost to the knees. The length of the breechclout depended, of course, upon the size and height of the individual, but would probably average six feet for an adult male. Since blue was the favored color for formal or dress-up occasions, some early observers believed it to be the predominant color.[17]

A vestige of the breechclout is still worn by conservative Comanches in the form of a gee-string beneath their Levis. It is nothing more than a braided cord passed between the legs and wrapped about the waist. It cannot be seen, is not decorative, but is magically protective of the male's sex organs.

[16] C. and J. D. Smith, *op. cit.*, 60.

[17] Informant: Medicine Woman; also, Smithwick, *op. cit.*, 184; David G. Burnet, "The Comanches and Other Tribes of Texas and the Policy to be Pursued Respecting Them," in Schoolcraft, *op. cit.*, I, 234.

The Comanches

778 Practically every Comanche in more or less varying degree possessed one or more of these amulets or charms which he carried or wore. Some were obtained from medicine men; others were discovered through visions. Men very commonly wore one or more such charms tied in the hair or about the neck. Especially did a man turn to his medicine if he had a new project of great importance in view, such as setting forth on the warpath or attempting a trading or hunting expedition into enemy territory. Charms were put on very young children by their mothers for the purpose of ensuring good health and protecting them from evil influences. Crow feathers had an especial protective power for babies; tied to the cradle-board, they kept away evil spirits. Their power was negative. In fact, we never heard of the crow's giving *puha* to a man. It was tabu to use crow feathers as flight feathers on arrows. "You absolutely cannot hit anything with such arrows," said That's It. Adding his contribution, Skinny and Wrinkled, who was interpreting, declared that he always uses the bow and arrow to hunt winter game. He is a Carlyle graduate and prone to test Comanche beliefs. "I have tried using crow-feather guides," he said. "It is no good. It does something to the shooter so he can't hit nothing."

[751] 237 [411]

A stuffed bat on the cradle also watched protectively over the baby. "He's little, but he's really a man."

756 In Comanche society practically all males and many old women came to possess medicine, but only those who possessed at least one outstanding thaumaturgic power were recognized as medicine men or women. The greater one's power, the greater the prestige he achieved. People possessing great power usually had several lesser powers as well, and they were sought after by would-be neophytes. According to Post Oak Jim, who is himself a notable medicine man, "A *puhakAt* likes to keep his favorite medicine, which he does not use often. If a young man offers smoke and asks for medicine, he will withhold his favorite and give him another."

This asking for medicine was an interesting aspect of Comanche practice and attitudes. From the Comanche point of view a good citizen should help his fellow tribesmen. Medicine was primarily to bring success in war and the hunt, activities in which the triumphs of each redounded to the benefit of all. Medicine, like a helping hand,

21: Burnet T-5 (1818-1819) 1954 NO6 Comanche NO6
Texas

[ca. 1818]

perament of the climate they inhabit, would seem to preclude the existence of consumptive diseases amongst them. They have faith in certain preternatural charms, and think, or affect to think, the oil of the beaver rubbed on the surface of the body, an impenetrable barrier to a ball; and will relate with infinite self-complacency, how the Goch-chupin's (Spaniards) balls, have hit them here and there, and fallen harmless to the ground. This idea may possibly have some operation and impart a factitious boldness to their minds, when opposed to the *Scopete* or Spanish musket; but few will be found of sufficient hardihood to repose confidence in their magical shields, when assailed by the ball of a rifle. They have an indescribable dread of that potent and unerring weapon. They sometimes wear around the neck, one or more highly aromatic kernels, resembling the Vanilla bean, which they esteem as amulets of infallible efficacy in preventing disease; and they indulge many other and more frivolous whimsicalities that are not worthy of notice in a description so cursory as this.

The Comanchees admit of polygamy to an unlimited extent, and have no fixed ceremonials of marriage. Their principal warriors have often from five to eight or ten wives, being restrained only by their own capricious humours. Carno-san-tua, (The Son of America), a chief of some note, left 10 widows to bewail his untimely death. The most comely of them, however, were soon dispersed, to herd with the connubial slaves of other Lords of the creation; while the less favoured retained their weeds, and prolonged their severe and sanguinary discipline of lamentation for the dead. The redoubtable warrior generally proportions the number of his help-mates to his means of maintenance, which implies simply animal sustentation, and in procuring which, his only agency is the killing of game. His wives, one or more of whom are always in attendance on his hunting excursions, perform the duties of ostler in catching, saddling, and turning out his horse; of page, in carrying his implements of the chase; of butcher and porter, in skinning and transporting his meat; and of cook and waiter, in preparing and serving it up. The Squaws are

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

753 of the witching feather which is injected into the victim's body is rapid and erratic motion.

The notion of swelling is included in practically every description of illness which Sanapia relates. It is also significant that one of her major medicines is *bekuinatsu*, or swelling medicine. In Sanapia's opinion, ghost sickness, pneumonia, rheumatism, asthma, headaches, vertigo, constipation, and a number of other human complaints have swelling as their central pathological core. As stated previously, the swelling is either produced by or produces a toxic liquid, usually referred to by Sanapia as foamy stuff, which by its nature expands in the body. It is this liquid or the swelling that produces this liquid, which causes the symptoms of illnesses such as those just mentioned, but not the illness itself. The foamy stuff, the only tangible and manipulatable manifestation of illness, is removed from the body by the *puhakut* by suction or by being driven out.

753 755 Sanapia states that she never removes an object from the patient's body claiming that she has removed the sickness, although she remembers that her mother did this. Sanapia feels that she cures by removing the poison, or foamy stuff, present in the patient's body and by using her supernatural powers to assure that through her prayers the patient may live a long and healthy life. In other words, the supernatural or unknown causes of the patient's illnesses are banished through her prayers.

751 753 Sanapia describes a healthy body as one which possesses a balance and calm throughout all its tissues, liquids, and organs. When something causes this balance and calm to be disrupted, sickness results. Some foreign agent moving in a rapid and erratic manner through the body is definitely unsettling to the body's parts. Swollen areas displace tissues, organs and body liquids, also unsettling the body balance. Foamy stuff irritates the body generally.

753 754 755 Sanapia is persistent in her comments that she never actually removes a real feather from the body of the victim of a witch; however, she states that most Comanches who come to her for this treatment believe she does.

> They ain't got no power . . . never learned them ways, so how do they know? They can think what they want to think. I get them well, or their little baby. That's what they come here for, and I do it so they can believe what they want. If it makes them happy, let them think what they like. I don't care about it myself.

From Sanapia's description of the doctoring of the witched victim, it can be seen that she does not exert herself to make him, or his parents, think any other way about the reality of the feather in his body. In other words, she never reports that there is not a feather in him, and all her behavior during the treatment only lends support to the patient's belief that there is a real feather present in his body.

754 755 756 Another aspect of the *puhakut*'s treatment of witchcraft victims is suggested by Kardiner (1945:67). He writes that Comanche doctors were able to identify the individual responsible for the witching during the treatment of the one who had been witched.